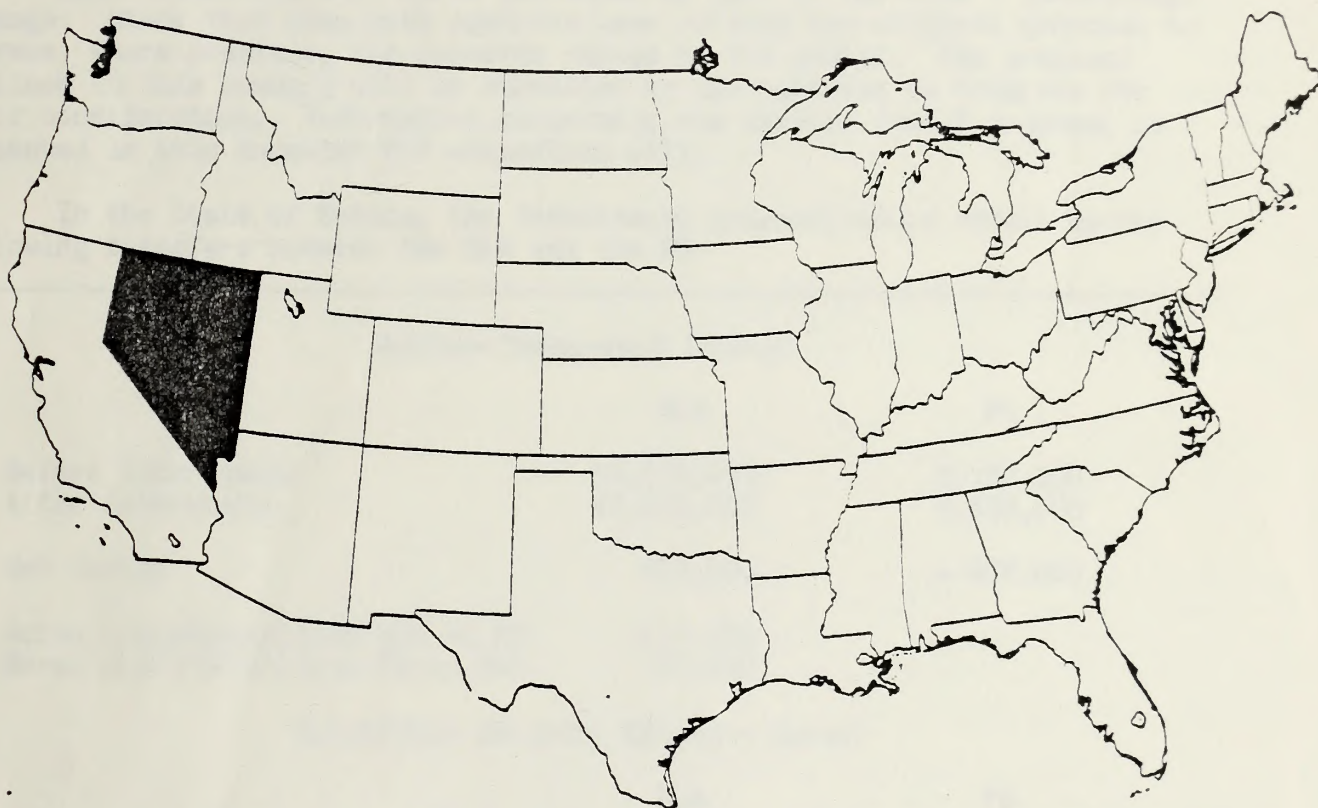




BLM/FS INTERCHANGE

Summary

NEVADA



PREPARED BY:

Intermountain Region

Nevada State Office

FOREST SERVICE

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT



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C.2INTERCHANGE IMPLEMENTATION SUMMARY
STATE OF NEVADA

I. OVERVIEW

The following summarizes the proposed Interchange for the State of Nevada. This summary includes a review of the public involvement, the proposed action, the anticipated costs and savings, and the actions identified during the study that can be taken independently of the Interchange. More detailed information is available for review in the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) State Office in Reno or the Forest Service (FS) Regional Office in Ogden, UT.

State summaries were first published as part of the June 7 Interchange package. Since that time both agencies have refined the original proposal to address, where possible, the concerns raised by the public. The proposal outlined in this summary will be submitted by the agencies to Congress for their consideration. Information concerning the earlier June 7 proposal is presented in this document for comparison only.

In the State of Nevada, the Interchange proposal would result in the following transfers between the BLM and the FS:

Surface Management (Acres)

	BLM	FS
Before Interchange	48,578,000	5,150,000
After Interchange	48,090,000	5,638,000
Net Change	- 488,000	+ 488,000
Acres transferred from BLM to FS	511,000	
Acres transferred from FS to BLM	23,000	

Subsurface (Mineral Estate - Acres)

	BLM	FS
Before Interchange	53,728,000	0
After Interchange	48,090,000	5,638,000

As a result of the Interchange, the BLM would assume management of small portions of the Toiyabe National Forest in the Excelsior Range area. The FS would assume management of public lands between the Utah-Nevada border and the Mt. Moriah Unit of the Ely Ranger District, and the lands immediately adjacent to the east side of the Ruby Mountains Unit, all in the vicinity of the Humboldt National Forest. The FS would also assume management of public lands along the Sierra Front and adjacent to the Las Vegas Ranger District, all in the vicinity of the Toiyabe National Forest.

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All Nevada communities currently housing a FS or BLM office would continue to house the same offices after the Interchange, as there would be no office closings or consolidations.

II. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Public involvement has been an integral part of refining the original Interchange proposal. BLM and FS representatives conducted numerous joint FS/BLM briefings and open houses for the public, State and local government officials, news media, special interest groups, organizations, and agency employees in Nevada. Two hundred twelve responses to the Interchange proposal originated in Nevada during the formal public review, June 7 to July 8.

The Nevada commenters strongly opposed the June 7 proposal for the State. They felt that the FS had better funding for carrying out resource management. They were concerned about potential negative economic impacts on rural counties and the State due to office closings and decreased tourism, and detrimental effects on resource management. They wanted the current management system to continue. The National Forest Task Force of Nevada submitted a detailed report opposing the proposal.

The main controversy was the proposed transfer of the Humboldt and Toiyabe National Forests. Some recommended as an alternative transferring only the Santa Rosa Ranger District of the Humboldt National Forest to the BLM.

A few commenters suggested creating a new Great Basin National Park and Bristlecone Pine National Monument to protect important resources, or allowing the State to manage the public lands.

The State Commission on Mineral Resources opposed the transfer of minerals leasing responsibilities to the FS because decentralizing responsibilities to local FS offices would reduce efficiency and create new access and coordination problems. They also questioned the FS minerals expertise. These concerns have been addressed nationally, and are discussed further in the minerals section of this summary.

All comments and suggestions were carefully considered in revising the Interchange proposal for Nevada. Based on the comments plus a recent meeting with the Nevada Congressional delegation and the National Forest Task Force of Nevada, the following changes were made.

- * Under the revised proposal, all major units of National Forest lands in Nevada would continue under FS jurisdiction.

- * The Sierra Front would have the same adjustments in land management as in the June 7 proposal -- the FS would continue to manage the Sierra Front as part of the Toiyabe National Forest, instead of out of National Forests headquartered in California.

- * About 15,000 acres of BLM lands would be added to the east side of the Ruby Mountains Unit of the Humboldt National Forest.

* About 17,000 acres of BLM lands would be added to the east side of the Mt. Moriah unit of the Humboldt National Forest.

* About 192,000 acres would be added to the Mt. Charleston unit of the Toiyabe National Forest at Las Vegas. The Red Rocks area and the Red Rocks Visitor Center would remain with the BLM.

The recommendations for developing the Great Basin National Park and Bristlecone Pine National Monument, and for transferring lands to the State were not studied further since they are outside the scope of the Interchange.

III. PROPOSED ACTION

A. Communities Affected

The Interchange proposal for Nevada would not result in any office changes for either the FS or the BLM.

B. Office and Staffing Changes

No offices in Nevada would be changed, nor would staffing change. The June 7 proposal called for office closings with a savings of 52 positions.

C. Lands and Minerals

A public room and a central repository of lands and minerals records would continue to be located in the BLM State Office in Reno. The adjudication or processing of minerals cases would be done in that office on a shared services basis. Environmental studies, stipulations, and decisions relative to minerals cases would be done by field offices of the two agencies. Lands cases would be noted on the official records in Reno, but almost all lands case processing and management would be done at the field offices of both agencies.

This shared services concept would satisfy the need of the public for a single records center for federal lands and minerals in Nevada.

As the implementation would progress and a current effort to computerize more of the lands and minerals records continues, more decentralization of the adjudication process could occur. This would provide the Nevada public with access to the central records repository through remote terminals at District and Supervisor Offices throughout the State of Nevada.

D. Public Service

The enlarged FS Las Vegas Ranger District would place management of the recreation opportunities around Mt. Charleston under one agency rather than two.

IV. ANTICIPATED COSTS AND SAVINGS

Although staffing of both agencies would remain the same, some efficiencies would occur in areas where acreages would transfer. Office co-locations can be pursued in those communities where both agencies are situated. It is estimated that these can result in an average annual savings from improved efficiency of approximately \$50,000.

V. ACTIONS THAT SHOULD BE TAKEN INDEPENDENTLY OF INTERCHANGE

Currently the FS and BLM maintain a joint fire dispatch office with the Nevada State Division of Forestry in the Washoe Valley. This provides for the most effective fire control at least cost. This joint effort should be extended to Elko and Las Vegas in the future.

Sharing of heavy equipment and personnel with scarce technical skills is a concept that should also be implemented where possible.

The sharing or co-location of space to save on fixed costs would save money. This concept should be studied particularly for Winnemucca and Tonopah. Additionally, each agency should sell the other's maps, firewood permits, Christmas tree permits, etc., thereby providing better public service.

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